

## WHITBECK ANNOUNCES \$1 MILLION IN BUDGET CUTS AT COURT OF APPEALS

For Immediate Release at 10:00 AM

May 11, 2007

Chief Judge William C. Whitbeck of the Michigan Court of Appeals today announced additional budget cuts at the Court for the current fiscal year totaling \$1 million. “Our appropriation for FY 2007 is \$19.6 million. In light of the proposed budget cuts approved by the House and Senate, the actions I am announcing today will cut an amount equivalent to 5% of that appropriation. And we are doing it in just four months,” Whitbeck said.

Whitbeck emphasized that over the last four fiscal years the Court has cut approximately \$5 million in costs from its budget. (See Attachment 1). “During this time, the Court has increased its efficiency and its productivity and dramatically reduced the time it takes to decide an appeal,” he said. (See Attachments 2, 3, and 4). “Unfortunately, the actions that we are taking today will bring this progress to a halt. In fact, delay on appeal will inevitably increase and no one benefits from delay:

- Not the child who waits for a custody decision nor the parents whose lives are in limbo during that same wait; (See Attachment 5).
- Not the business defendant whose operations are stymied while litigation crawls through the appeals process nor the individual plaintiff whose recovery remains in doubt during that process;
- Not the criminal defendant who protests his innocence but sits in prison while his appeal is pending nor the crime victim who awaits the outcome of that same appeal.”

The actions that Whitbeck announced include:

- *Court Closures.* The Court will close for at least eight days over the next four months. On these days, a small group of judges and administrators will be on-call to handle emergency filings but the Court will be closed to the public and will not pay its employees. The Court will schedule these days in pairs around Memorial Day (May 25 and 29), Independence Day (July 5 and 6) and Labor Day (August 31 and September 4). The Court will schedule the remaining two closure days for mid-August (August 10 and 13).
- *Contract Attorney Program.* The Court will suspend this program, under which former staff attorneys prepare research reports and draft opinions on a contract basis, as of June 1, 2007, and continuing at least until October 1, 2007. This suspension will materially slow down the processing of appeals involving children, including custody appeals and termination of parental rights appeals.
- *Expedited Summary Disposition Track.* The Court has suspended the expedited track for appeals from summary disposition orders, effective May 7. Although this will not result in immediate monetary savings, it will allow the Court to process true priorities and the oldest cases in a timelier manner given its reduced staffing levels.
- *Hiring Freeze.* The Court has not filled most job vacancies that have arisen since January 1, 2007, and will continue a hiring freeze for the foreseeable future.
- *Other Actions.* The Court will take a number of other actions including freezing step increases for its employees, and canceling the longevity payments for its longer-term employees.

“Ninety percent of our costs at the Court are for personnel,” Whitbeck said. “Therefore, these actions will most immediately impact our employees. But I emphasize that over the longer term, these

actions will directly and negatively affect the people who appear before us and who depend on us for prompt and fair decisions on their appeals.”

Whitbeck noted that the Court’s cost cutting plan is a flexible one. “These measures will allow us to manage our budgetary situation through the end of this fiscal year,” he said. “They will also position us to deal appropriately with the budgetary challenges we expect to face in the next fiscal year. If our financial situation worsens, we will face the very real possibility of implementing more cost-saving measures, including additional court closures and layoffs.”

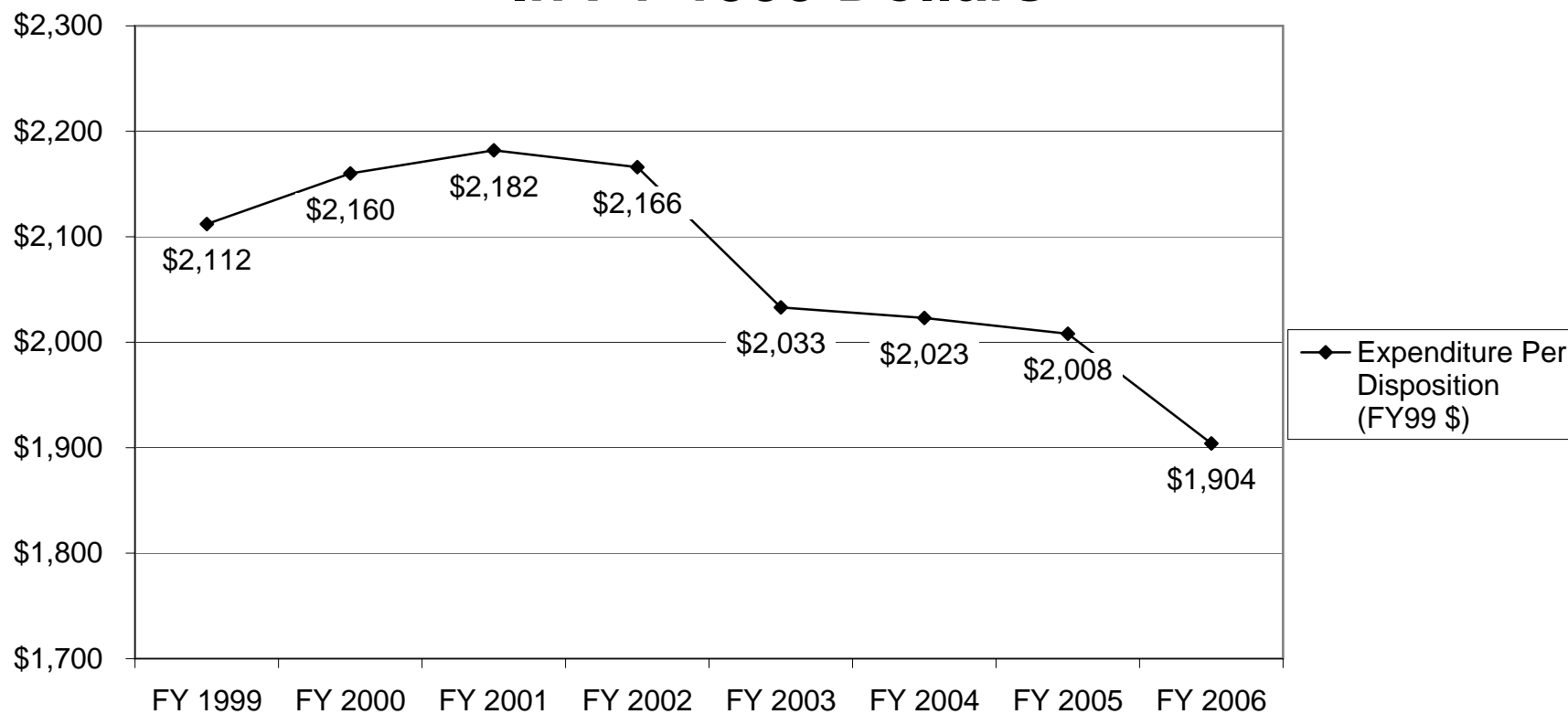
For Additional Information

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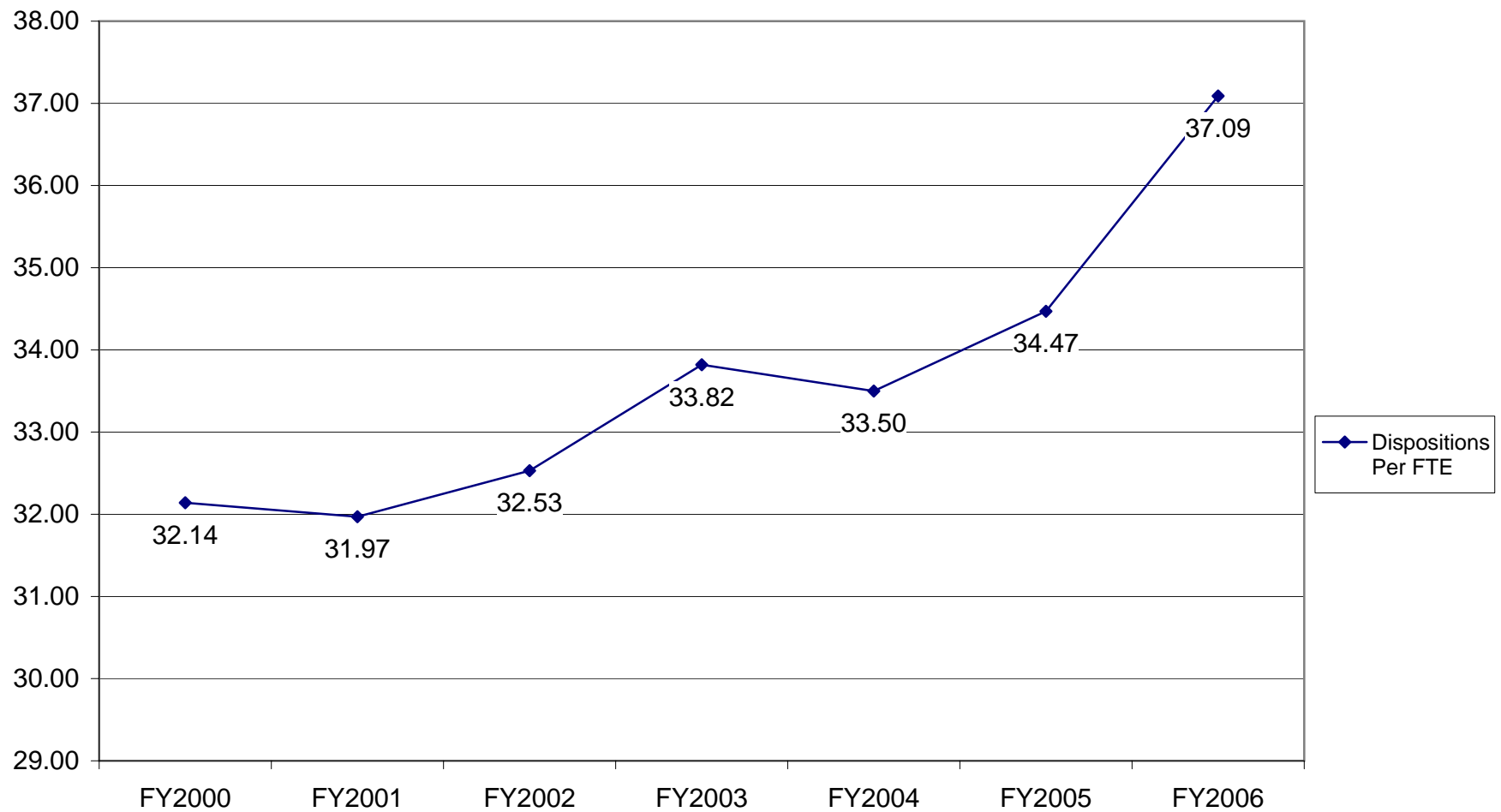
### Cost Savings Measures At The Court Of Appeals

	<b><u>FY2003</u></b>	<b><u>FY2004</u></b>	<b><u>FY2005</u></b>	<b><u>FY2006</u></b>	<b><u>FY2007</u></b>	<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>
Change Health Insurance to State Plan	\$255,000	\$255,000	\$255,000	\$255,000	\$255,000	\$1,275,000
Eliminate Cell Phones for Judges		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
Eliminate Department Vehicles (Admin & IS)	\$3,000	\$6,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$36,000
Reduce Electronic Research Contract		\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$80,000
Change Law Books to MCLS from MCLA	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$300,000
Discontinue MCLS Updates (pocket parts)		\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$240,000
Reduce from 100 MCLS sets to 40 MCLA sets					\$34,000	\$34,000
Other Library Reductions		\$36,000	\$76,000	\$96,000	\$0	\$208,000
Eliminating Judicial Out-of-State Travel	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$75,000
Held Vacancies - Clerk's Office			\$58,000	\$120,000	\$184,800	\$362,800
Held Vacancies - Research Division				\$285,760	\$415,000	\$700,760
Unpaid Furlough Day		\$40,000				\$40,000
Judicial Stationery Reductions		\$800	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$3,200
Eliminate Maintenance Contracts		\$23,000	\$38,000	\$38,000	\$38,000	\$137,000
Plan A savings		\$87,500	\$93,000	\$73,400	\$84,300	\$338,200
FY2004 Lump Sum Instead of COLA 3%		\$0	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$900,000
FY2006 Lump Sum Instead of COLA 2%				\$0	\$220,000	\$220,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$333,000</b>	<b>\$613,300</b>	<b>\$994,800</b>	<b>\$1,342,960</b>	<b>\$1,705,900</b>	<b>\$4,989,960</b>

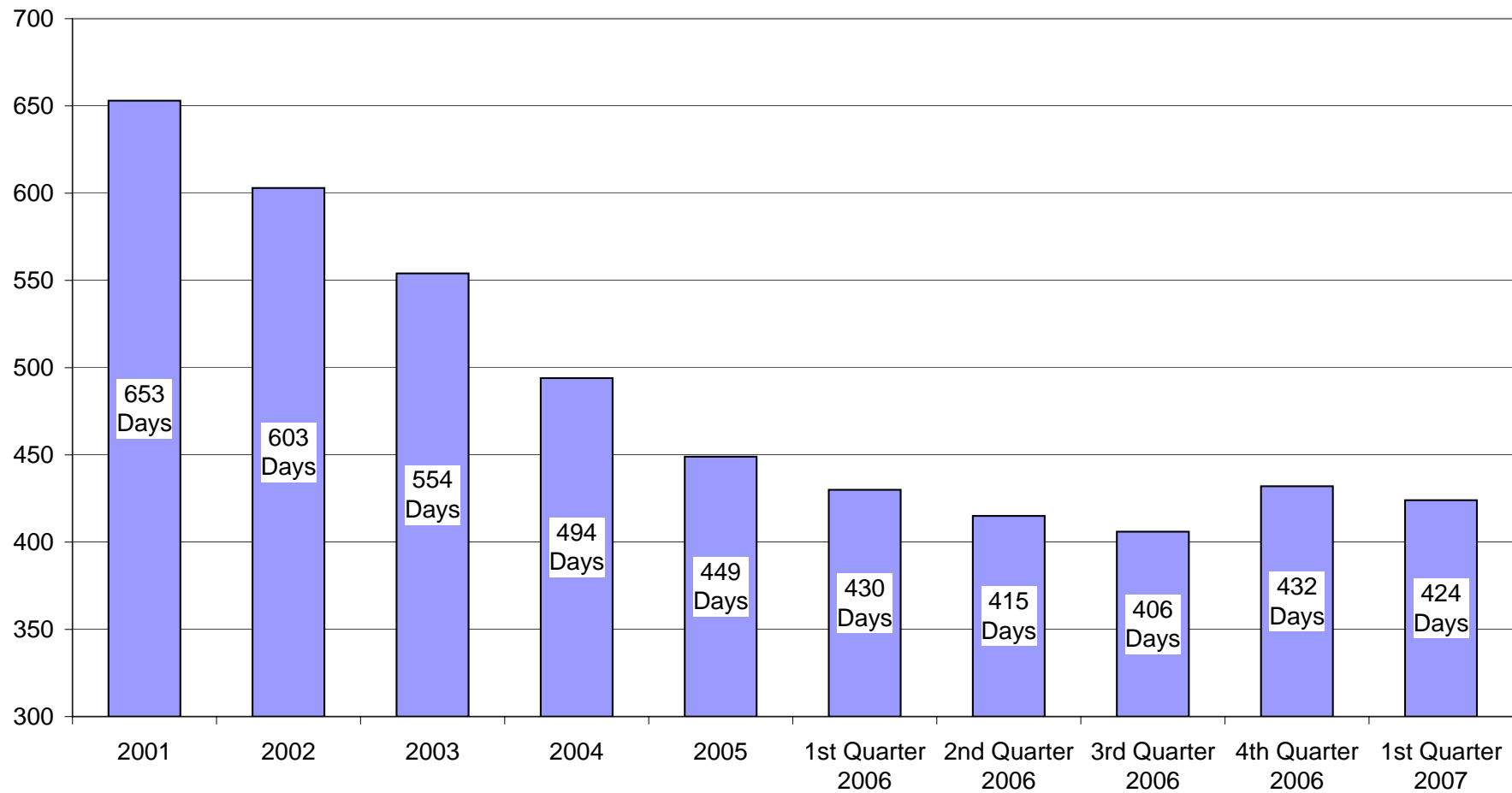
## COA Expenditure Per Disposition In FY 1999 Dollars



## COA Dispositions Per FTE



## Overall Time In Processing



## AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME DEPENDENCY APPEALS

